Foreign maojrity participation in HMT

1402. CHOWDHRY HARI SINGH :Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have decided to allow foreign majority participation in the Hindustan Machine Tools ;

(b) if so, what is the contemplated revised structure of this company; and

(c) what is the accumulated loss so far suffered by the HMT alongwith the profit and losses incurred by it during the last three years ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SMT. KRISHNA SAHI) : (a) and (b) Government has approved, in principle, the conversion of the individual business groups of HMT Limited into joint venture companies with international partners who may have majority equity share holding if it is in HMT's interest. No specific proposals have been received so far.

(c) The net profit made by HMT during the last three years is as follows :—

(Rs. in crores)

Year	Net Profit
1990-91 . . .	14.15
1991-92 . . .	26.08
1992-93 . . .	2.72

There is no accumulated loss as on 31-3-1993.

Industrially backward districts in Bihar

1403. SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have decided that industrially backward areas shall be determined in terms of areas smaller than the States, preferably the districts ;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have identified as to how many districts in Bihar are industrially backward ;

(d) what are the details of such districts; and

(e) what special schemes have been prepared by Government to remove their backwardness ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SMT. KRISHNA SAHI) : (a) and (b) : There is at present no proposal to revise the list of backward districts/areas.

(c) and (d) Eighteen districts namely, Bhagalpur, Champaran, Darbhanga, Muzaffarpur, Palamau, Purnea, Saharsa, Santhal Parganas, Saran, Nalanda, Aurangabad, Newadah, Gaya, Bhojpur, Begusarai, Monghyr, Khagaria and Madhepur.

(e) The Government, in 1988, announced a Growth Centre Scheme under which some growth centres would be developed throughout the country during the 8th Plan period. Each growth centre would be provided basic infrastructural facilities like water, power, telecom, banking etc., so as to attract industries to these areas. Under the Scheme, Bihar has been allotted 6 growth centres out of which 5 fall in Centrally declared backward districts.

Crisis in Newsprint Industry

1404. SHRIMATI SARALA MAHESHWARI : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that newsprint industry has landed into a big crisis;

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor;

(c) whether it is a fact that due to the huge imports of foreign newsprint, the unsold stock portion of the indigenous industry has crossed the normal limit; and

(d) if so, what measures are being taken to bail out this industry from the present crisis ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRIMATI KRISHNA SAHI): (a)and(b) Newsprint Mills and Indian Newsprint Manufacturers Association have *interalia* represented to the Government that newspaper units are importing newsprint in excess of the limit prescribed under the EXIM Policy. Consequently, the newspaper units are not lifting the required quantity of newsprint from the indigenous mills which has resulted in accumulation of unsold stocks with the indigenous mills.

(c) The quantity of stock lying as on 15-2-1994 with various public sector newsprint mills is reported to be about 32,000 MT.

(d) Suitable steps are taken by the Government as and when required to help the indigenous industry.